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THE HISTORY OF  
THE LITURGY OF THE  
LUTHERAN CHURCH IN DENMARK.

BY THE

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PEDER PALLADIUS

Born in 1503 in Ribe; died in 1560.

He was a student under Luther and Melanchthon,  
and was the *Bugenhagen* of Denmark.



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ALMOST immediately after the ushering in of the great Reformation in Germany in 1517, the revived apostolic doctrines found their way into Denmark and were preached with intense enthusiasm, especially by several men, who had sat at the feet of Luther and Melancthon in Wittenberg. And it is one of the marvels of history, that in less than twenty years, 1536, the Roman Catholic ecclesiastical establishment had been abolished and the Evangelical Lutheran order had risen in its place. This wonderful revolution was not the result of the labors of any one great leader, but was a spontaneous movement throughout the whole country, reaching all classes of people. And the leading feature was the historical characteristic of Protestantism—the earnest preaching of the Gospel, which had for ages been obscured and kept in the background by the blinding and misleading errors and ceremonies of the papacy.

In some of the cities well arranged orders of public worship were used, but in the smaller communities and in the rural districts the ministers conducted the services according to their own judgment, but in harmony with the fundamental teachings of the Word of God. When a minister was appointed to the charge of a parish he was enjoined “to teach and preach to the people of the parish God’s pure, clear Word and Gospel, which he can prove by Holy Scripture, and to teach them their souls’ salvation, as he will answer before God and be known before the king. He shall conduct divine service for them in Danish, if they require it, without any human additions or ungodly ceremonies,



and give them the Holy Sacrament, the Body and Blood of the Lord, in both kinds, as Christ Himself instituted and commanded it; and he shall lead a good, honest life, and give his people a good example. And, if he have not the grace of continence, then he shall take unto himself a worthy woman to wife, and live with her in good, honorable, Christian wedlock, and not have a concubine (as the custom had been) nor any other person with him, of whom any may have suspicion."

The people were happy in the possession of an excellent Danish translation of the New Testament, made by Christian Pederson in 1529, which superceded those previously published. It ranked with the Danes as Luther's did with the Germans. A collection of hymns was also composed by Claus Mortensen in Danish. And intense religious fervor characterized the services and was long maintained, as we learn from a letter addressed by Bugenhagen to his Elector on his return from Denmark to Wittenberg in 1539. He used the following strong language: "The Gospel is preached purely and powerfully in Denmark. May God grant progress as He has begun. I have been nowhere where the people so gladly and so diligently hear preaching as in Denmark, even on week days, in winter, and before daylight, throughout the whole day at the Festivals; and they pray diligently."

But, in 1536, it was felt by the clergy and the pious king, Christian III, that an authorized and uniform Church law, governing the whole sphere of the ministerial and pastoral activity, ought to be prepared and promulgated. And, with this object in view, the king requested the Elector of Saxony to send John Bugenhagen to Denmark to aid in the great work of reorganization. But the answer was given that he could not be spared at that time; and he did not arrive until the summer of 1537.

[In the meanwhile the new Church law was drawn up by a commission of 29 ministers and theologians,] among whom were Peder Laurensen, Frants Vormordsen, Oluf Chrysostomus (Gyldenmund), Hans Tausen, Joergen Jensen Sadolin, and members of the Cathedral Chapters, and prominent ministers from Sleswig, as Herman Tast, Gert Slewert and John Vandal. [When this document, which is known in history as the *Ordinance of Christian III*, was completed, the king amended it and then sent it, as he expressed himself in his later letter of confirmation, to "worthy Father Doctor Martin Luther, by whom God in His mercy and kindness, in these last times, has again sent Christ's holy and pure Gospel; thus he, with several other men highly learned in Scripture, in Wittenberg, examined the same Ordinance and



adjudged it to be good and right." And, when Bugenhagen arrived in Denmark, he still farther revised it, after which, in the same year, it was published in Latin, but did not, in the fullest sense, become the law of the Church until 1539, when it was translated into Danish by Peder Palladius and duly adopted by the Diet in Odense, June 14, 1539.

This Ordinance, directing how the Church service shall be held in the kingdom of Denmark and the Duchies of Sleswig and Holsten," thus became the established law of the Danish Lutheran Church. The Diet did not change it, but advised prudence and gentleness in introducing it. This Ordinance is very comprehensive. It confirms the true doctrines of the Church; gives suggestions for their presentation in the sermons; designates the festival days and their proper pericopes; the mode of procedure in calling Pastors, Provosts and Bishops and defines their duties and rights; sets forth the proper church usages; gives rules for the religious instruction of the children, the management of the church property, the care of the poor, and provision for the education of men for the ministry.

And, in order to carry out the provisions of the Ordinance under proper supervision, the king appointed the first Bishops, seven in number, who were ordained to their high office by Bugenhagen, September 2, 1537. The ceremony took place in Copenhagen in Frue Kirke, which is still standing. The names of the Bishops are—Peder Palladius, Frants Vormorsen, Joergen Jensen Sadolin, Jakob Skoenning, Peder Thomesen, Mads Lang, and Johan Vandal, the last named being a German appointed to the diocese of Ribe. The ministers desired the appointment of an archbishop, but such was not made; yet the bishop of Zealand has always practically occupied that position, being regarded as *primus inter pares*.

In regard to the order of public service, the Ordinance, like the older German Kirchen Ordnungen, confined itself to the general outlines of the evangelical service, and, as a rule, did not give the full formulas, which had long been in use, but with the opening words indicated what the minister should say. But this did not imply the minister's liberty to fill out the formulas according to his own judgment; for when such was contemplated it was specifically so stated. These formulas were, however, given in full in later "law books" of the church. The Ordinance remained in force until 1640. But it became necessary to prepare books giving more specific directions for the conduct of public service, and these took their place by the side of the Ordinance. And



the first of these "Hand Books" or "Altar Books," as they were called, and the only ones now extant, are the Enchiridion of Palladius, 1538, and the Hand Book of Vormorsen, 1539. The latter of these aimed especially to explain and facilitate the use of the directions of the Ordinance. Neither of these contained the text of the Pericopes, but, from Palladius' introduction to the edition of the Altar Books of 1555, we learn that there were smaller books in use containing the Gospel and Epistle lessons and the Collects. From this state of things, as we might expect, there arose a want of uniformity in the order of service, and, to remedy this, Palladius by order of the Synod of Copenhagen issued a new edition of the Altar Book in 1556, giving fuller directions and forms. (Pontoppidan's *Annales Danicæ Ecclesiæ*, 3, 335.)

But, as the right to make changes in the Liturgy was accorded to the Bishops, and as many matters needed to be cleared up, a Synod was convened in Copenhagen in 1540, which enacted 27 Statuta bearing on the Liturgy, church discipline, and the jurisdiction of ministers. This marks the second great act in ecclesiastical legislation in Denmark.

But the Bishops often gave special directions in liturgical matters and hence arose again considerable confusion ; and to overcome this it was ordered that the practice in Frue Kirke in Copenhagen should be followed as the norm. It will thus be seen that the church, as such and as a whole, had no direct voice in framing the liturgical orders ; still it was held that the pastors were, in an important sense, the representatives of the congregations in the Synod. And the people did exercise a marked influence in regard to forms and usages in the churches, for the ministers were very largely governed by their wishes and demands, as in the questions raised about the elevation in the Lord's Supper and the exorcism in Baptism. But, in 1685, the king assumed the right to regulate all liturgical matters, though he claimed that he exercised it with the advice of the Bishops and other learned men. He made the Altar Book binding on all, and prescribed penalties for disobedience, but arbitrarily granted special privileges and made exceptions in favor of some of the clergy and parishes.

In the Duchies the Synodical authority given by Christian IV in 1646, continued in force, and in 1691 Christian V restored that order throughout the kingdom. The Synods effected many changes in the cultus and in other matters. In 1730 they began the preparation of a new Ritual, and in 1737 they determined to abolish the order of exorcism.



Strenuous efforts were made to bring about the desired uniformity in the service, and at the Synod in Roeskilde, 1585, a Bishop complained that some of the pastors omitted the exhortation and the prescribed Benediction in the Communion service, and several were removed from their parishes for failing to follow the approved order. (Pont., 3, 501.)

The importance of uniformity was affirmed already in the Synod of Copenhagen, in 1540, in very emphatic language. And Palladius, in the appendix to his *Enchiridion*, says to the clergy,—“it is my humble prayer and request to you, each and all, chiefly first for the honor of God and farther for the edification of the holy church, that you will all unitedly keep these ceremonies in force,” and the Synod of Antvorskov in 1546, closed with these words,—“we wish and ask in love, according to the authority given us by God, that the servants of God’s Word throughout this Danish kingdom, all as one man, will govern themselves by these rules.” (Pont., 3, 296.) And these admonitions and requests were very generally respected.

The legislation of the Danish Church, in regard to the order of worship, was in close accord with Luther’s instructions and the example of the German Churches. Luther’s order of 1523 was more closely followed than that of 1526 out of regard for the prejudices and weaknesses of the people and because it retained some old features which were viewed with favor. Several parts of the service were intoned by the minister, guided by musical notes provided in the *Hand Book* of 1539. This practice still prevails in the Scandinavian Church even in this country.

The singing of Danish hymns became a very prominent part of the public service and more and more forced out several anthems and set aside some of the old formulas, even versifying the Lord’s Prayer and the Ten Commandments. The great and praiseworthy aim was to have much congregational singing and less praise by proxy.

After these general observations on the subject before us, we may now proceed to note more minutely the several parts of the service, and first—

#### OF THE CHIEF SERVICE. HOEIMESSE.

The original conception of the chief service, as that of the Holy Communion, is recognized in the first section of the instructions of the Ordinance—“On the outward order and the minister’s prayer.”

1. The Ordinance directs that the minister shall appear before the Altar in the appropriate vestments and, kneeling, say the Confiteor



in Danish or Latin, as stated in the Hand Book. And it was ordered that at this point a prayer should be offered for the king and the kingdom, but this was later omitted, and in its stead was inserted an "oratio concionatoris ante missam," and this in Danish translation in the XVI century. Hence the service began with a silent prayer by the minister, the people also praying, kneeling. In the XVII century two forms of prayer were provided, the one for the beginning and the other for the close of the service, to be offered audibly by the Deacon standing at the door of the chancel or in the middle aisle. But in the Hymn Book of 1553 there are indications that the minister made confession for the people and used a form, in which they participated in the prayer. In that Book there are three parts before the Introitus," adjutorium nostrum in nomine Domini," "Confiteor" in Danish, and an "evangelical absolution over the congregation" in the precatory form. The adjutorium is given in a stanza of four lines, as follows,—

Our help is in the Name of the Lord,  
Who made heaven and earth.  
Acknowledge the Lord, for He is good,  
And His mercy endureth forever.

These words were doubtless said by the minister, who then read the confession of sin and expressed the wish for the pardon of the people. And we have here an instance of the transformation of the Catholic Ritus which the Lutherans were wont to make, for these same three parts occur in the priest's personal preparation for the Mass in the Catholic cultus, as is fully explained in Siegel's Handbuch der Christ. kirch. Alterthuemer, 3, 376.

2. The Ordinance prescribed, that, after the prayer, there shall be said or sung the Introitus, or, in its stead, some Danish hymn, especially in the country. And, in the Hymn Book of 1569, the rule is laid down that the hymn shall be in harmony with the Gospel lesson or the special occasion.

3. Immediately after the hymn, the Kyrie was sung by the Deacon in the original form, Kyrie eleison, Christe eleison, Kyrie eleison, or in the corresponding Danish words. This form was sung by the Catholic priest nine times, but the Synod of Copenhagen, in 1540, limited it to three times. (Pont., 3, 350.) By assigning this to the Deacon the way was paved for making it a hymn by the choir or congregation, and hence we find that it appears as such in the Hymn Book of 1539. The first line is "Kyrie Gud Fader alsomhoeiste Troest." And in the Hymn Book from 1453 to 1778 there were three hymns,



which versified the Kyrie. The Synod of 1546 prescribed that the Kyrie should be sung three times in the cities, but in the form of a hymn in ruralibus.

4. After this it is ordered that "the minister shall intone the angelic song of praise,—'Gloria in excelsis Deo,' in Latin or Danish and then the church shall follow it." The meaning here is made clearer when we note, that, in the Danish translation, the order is that the minister shall sing,—“Glory to God in the highest” and the choir and congregation shall join in the rest. In later years this was modified and it was used only on special occasions and was then sung by the minister in Latin; and at the regular services a hymn took its place.

5. The minister then turns and faces the congregation, and, after the Responsory, there follows the prescribed Collect. After the Psalm, the Deacon and congregation respond—*Amen*.

6. After this the minister again turns to the altar and intones the Epistle “slowly, clearly, so that the people can well understand and mark him.” In the Hymn Book of 1569 careful provision is made for correct intoning, the musical notes being given, but especially for the Epistle and Gospel. There a musical division in five parts is made,—comma et colon, periodus, periodus alia, questio et finale.

7. The ordinance next directs,—“The Hallelujah, which is a perpetual sound in the holy church, shall be sung by two children, and also the long Halle after it. After this, in the place where it is customary to sing the gradual, a Danish hymn shall be sung, or a gradual alone with two verses. All Sequences shall be left out except at the three great Christian Festivals.” But later the strong desire for congregational singing led to the substitution of a hymn for the Hallelujah. This hymn was in harmony with the Epistle. Still the Hallelujah is found in the Hymn Book of 1690.

8. The Sequences were retained in the Lutheran Church, though for several years they were used only on festival days. But, in the Hymn Book of 1553, they were provided for the whole year and verses of a hymn were combined with the Psalm, and there were several other minor variations, which were modified in the Hymn Book of 1569, that follows the Ordinance and makes only this addition, that, after the Hallelujah, from Pentecost to Candlemas Day, there shall be sung the hymn to the Holy Ghost—“Nu bede vi den hellig Aand,” in four stanzas. And here the Ritual farther specifies some changes for the several great sections of the church year.

9. Then the minister turns and faces the people and reads the



Gospel. The Ordinance does not speak of the repetition of the Responsory—"The Lord be with you," nor that with which the choir greeted the Gospel—"God be praised for His joyful message;" but the Hand Book of 1539 has both and the Synod of 1540 ordered that they should be retained. (Pont., 3, 250.) And the Hymn Book of 1569 contains musical notes for both the minister's words and the response of the Deacon and the congregation. The Ritual keeps the Responsory as it presents two forms,—“God be praised for His joyful message” and “Praise and honor be to Thee, O Lord.”

10. After the Gospel the minister turns to the altar and intones “Credo” and the choir joins in with “Patrem omnipotentem etc.,” and immediately after this the congregation sings the hymn “Vi troe allesammen,” that is, We all do believe. But the Hand Book of 1539 directs that the Latin Credo shall be sung only where there are Latin schools, and this became the general custom. But later a hymn took the place of the Creed, which was always that of Nicea.

11. The Ordinance directs that the Creed—always the Nicene—shall be followed by the sermon, but the Hand Book of 1539 says that a hymn shall be sung between the Creed and the sermon.

12. The sermon was preceded and followed by prayer, minister and people kneeling. Near the close of the sermon the minister, according to the Hand Book of 1539, must “exhort the people, that, each in his or her place, should humbly make confession before the face of God, and repeat the holy catechism, word for word, without comment, in that form, which the worthy Father Martinus has set before us out of the Holy Scripture, which the Danish catechism book contains.” This was the preparation for the Lord’s Supper, but it was discontinued later, as such, when private confession was introduced, as ordered by the Synod of 1540. But in some localities the public confession was practiced. Yet the recitation of the catechism was continued as a means of instruction. This change disturbed the close connection of the sermon with the Holy Communion, and the direction was given, that, at the close of the sermon and before leaving the pulpit, the minister should begin the singing of a prescribed hymn.

13. At this point the Holy Communion was administered, of whose order we will treat separately farther on. The Catholic office of the Offertorium with its unscriptural representation of the sacrifice was excluded. The service of the communion was short, the Ordinance giving this rule,—“after a hymn or two there shall be read a collect or two and the pronouncing of the Benediction.” But later this



was shortened by the limitation to one hymn and one collect, and between 1556 and 1564, the particular collect to be used, when there was no Communion was designated. This and the Benediction with the Responsorium, by which they were preceded, constituted the altar service after the sermon.

14. A hymn *pro pace* or *pro exitu* closed the whole service. For this purpose the Hand Book of 1539 provides the Decalogue versified, and the Hymn Book of 1553 has it in four forms, and the Hymn Book of 1569 recommends the singing of the Decalogue so that thus the whole of Luther's Catechism may be used at the service; but in 1573 this was prescribed for the country parishes only and that during the Trinity season. Then the minister and congregation kneeling, offered silent prayer.

#### MATINS AND VESPERS.

The Danish term for Matins is *Ottesang*, that is, eight o'clock song, as the service is held from 8 to 9 A. M., and, for Vespers, *Aftensang*, evening song, from 2 to 3 P. M. The daily services at those hours closely followed Luther's *Deutsche Messe*, where there were Latin schools, and were especially intended to train the young in religious knowledge and worship. The Latin was used to a considerable extent, but the Danish was also used for the benefit of those who did not understand the former. Antiphons, *Kyrie eleison*, and hymns were sung and lessons read from the Old and the New Testament. Sermons were not always preached, but, when they were, they treated chiefly of penitence and good works, so that the Law as well as the Gospel might be put before the people. The Holy Communion was sometimes administered, but only in very special cases; but, after the time of Christian V, it became the rule rather than the exception in the larger places. Two services were held on Wednesdays and Fridays which conformed to the Sunday service, and the forenoon service followed the full order of the *Hoeimesse* or chief service and included the Communion. At the Matin and Vesper service on Sunday and Festivals the whole Catechism was recited.

#### THE COLLECTS.

Much might here be written about the history and use of the Collects in the Danish church, but I will not enter fully into this extensive subject, but merely state, that, immediately after the introduction of the Reformation, the Collects or *Orationes* of the Catholic church, were used, with some exceptions, in accordance with Luther's practice.



The first collection of these short prayers in the Danish church is found in the Hand Book of 1539, and a revised edition is given in the Hymn Book of 1553. The collection now in use is very full for all Sundays, Festivals, and all special services and subjects, and sacramental acts. And we note that the Collects are from two to three times as long as those in our Church Book. They are very devout in spirit and expression, and are given in pure Danish.

#### THE ORDER OF INFANT BAPTISM.

In passing from the consideration of the more general services of the church, we naturally direct our attention to the Sacraments, and, first, to that of Baptism.

It is not known who was the first to administer Baptism in Danish, but the eminent reformer, Hans Tausen, published the first baptismal formula in that language. And whilst that form is in harmony with the original Taufbuechlein of Luther, it was not copied from it; and internal evidence shows that the author did not have it before him, although he must have been acquainted with it, as he had been with Luther in Wittenberg. He retained all the symbolical features, as he deemed it unwise to hasten radical changes in things immaterial, but he stated that the use of these minor forms was not compulsory. And the Liturgy of Malmoe in 1535 indicates that these forms had been abandoned previous to that date. Thus it is evident that the ritual varied before the full establishment of the Reformation. The Ordinance of 1536 does not give the full form for Baptism, but simply says, "Thus shall he begin: Depart, thou unclean spirit." And there is good reason for believing that Luther's form, of 1523, was closely followed, of which Palladius provided an accurate translation in his Enchiridion of 1538, and declared that there should be no variation from Luther's words, though he made an exception, namely, in the long prayer at the exorcism, "O Almighty, eternal God, Who in the Flood," etc. Here Luther says,—"*dass durch diese heilsame Suendfluth an ihm ersauffe und untergehe Alles, was ihm von Adam angebohren ist und was er selbst dazu gethan hat;*" but Palladius has,—"*All that which is born in him from Adam, that is, that sin which Adam committed,*" which has a dogmatic significance. This book was used by the side of the Ordinance, which designates some additional particulars. But some variations were practiced, especially in the Provinces, and the Synod of 1540 gave strict directions to observe the prescribed order, (Pont., 3, 252,) as also that of 1556.



In the oldest orders, in the Ordinance and the Hand Book of 1539, the act begins with the questions whose child it is and whether it had been baptized at home, but later the former of these was omitted as casting a shadow on the baptismal scene in the case of illegitimate children. The minister was then directed "to declare to the company standing around [the font], in few but forcible words, the exalted nature of Baptism;" and the outline given indicates that the address was intended for the whole congregation as well as for the sponsors. And this direction was emphasized by the Diet at Aarhus in 1631, in the words: "Caveant Pastores, ne omittatur adhortatio, quae ad paternos necessario fieri solet." But this very proper direction was stricken out at the Diet at Viborg in 1699.

The act of Baptism began with Exorcism. This part of the Catholic ritual had been abolished by the Reformation and was excluded by Luther in his first "Unterrecht wie man einen Menschen zum christlichen Glauben taufen lassen solle, 1521." And the Danish Lutherans also began to omit Exorcism, but the early Liturgies show that it was re-adopted with Luther's modifications. Vigorous efforts were soon made to abolish it altogether but failed for the time being.

The Exorcism was followed by the Gospel, and that by the Lord's Prayer. In the older books the doxology of the prayer is wanting, after the example of Luther, but in all the later ones it is inserted. During this prayer the minister and the people kneeled, with the thought, that, as the prayer was offered over the child, the Lord Himself was blessing it. But in the later Altar Books this beautiful practice was omitted.

Then the minister calls the sponsors to the Font and says,—“The Lord preserve thy coming in and thy going out.” This was followed by the renunciation of the devil and by the Creed, each of which is respectively uttered in three parts. The questions were addressed to the child. Then come the baptizing in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, the last prayer, and the Pax, admonition to the sponsors to teach the child the Creed, the Lord's Prayer and the Ten Commandments.

No change was made in this part of the Liturgy until 1783, when the act of Exorcism, even in its modified form, was strongly opposed as weakening the thought of the daily conflict with the devil. And, after some controversy, it was abolished, but the signing with the cross was retained with the addition,—“for a witness that thou shalt believe on the crucified Lord Jesus Christ.”



The order, as revised in 1895, is as follows : Address to the sponsors ; signing with the cross ; prayer ; Gospel, Mark 10:13-16 ; Lord's Prayer ; praise to God who will now regenerate the child ; "God preserve thy coming," etc. ; renunciation and Creed in singularis with questions to the child ; "Wilt thou be baptized?" ; Baptism ; child commended to God ; Pax ; admonition to sponsors ; Collect.

#### ADULT BAPTISM.

As infant Baptism was practically universal at the opening of the Reformation, Luther did not provide a special form for the Baptism of adults, and in Denmark there was no such form for 150 years. The first case, of which we have knowledge, occurred in 1620. The form finally given was that for infants, with some omissions rather than alterations, namely, the Exorcism, signing with the cross, and the Gospel, a hymn taking the place of the last of these parts. But, in the revised form of 1895, part of the Gospel is read,—Matt. 28:18-20, and the signing with the cross is restored. On the preceding Sunday the intended Baptism is announced, and on the day of its occurrence, the service had special reference to this Sacrament. The candidate occupied a seat specially set apart for him, was examined and commended to the love and care of the congregation. The person baptized assumed a new or additional name, at his pleasure. And, at the close of the service, the minister briefly addressed the sponsors or witnesses, who stood at either side of the altar. The presence of such sponsors at adult Baptism was no new thing. They appeared in the ante Christic period at the Baptism of adult proselytes to Judaism as well as of "exposed children" or foundlings. The Babylonian Talmud says that the number was two, but the Jerusalem Talmud and Maimonides say three.

#### CONFIRMATION.

In the Catholic Church, Confirmation was and is still held to be a Sacrament, and to supplement and complete Baptism. (Conc. Trident. De Confirmatione.) And hence it was entirely abandoned by the Protestants for a long time. The latter held that the rite was related to the Lord's Supper and connected with the proper preparation for that Sacrament. As it was necessary that all who come to the Communion should be prepared in head and heart for the sacred act and were examined before they were admitted, it was felt that the young, who presented themselves for the first time, should be carefully questioned as to their fitness, and when they gave satisfactory evidence



of this, they should be approved. Bugenhagen, in his introduction to Palladius' *Enchiridion*, without a word about vows or Baptism combines the examination of children and other communicants in that he declares the words of Luther's Small Catechism to be the confession upon which the child of eight years and the centenarian are alike admitted to the Communion. Through the labors of Melancthon and Chemnitz (*Exam. Conc. Trid. De Confirmatione*) Confirmation, divested of papal errors, was reintroduced in Germany, and still farther in the movement under Spener in the XVII century; but it did not reach the Danish Church. The Danish Ordinance gave directions for the examination of all communicants, though in practice there were some special features in that of the young admitted for the first time, but nothing that would justify the application to it of the term confirmation, as we now use it to designate a distinct act. Niels Hemmingsen, in the middle of the XVI century, is the first to use the word "confirm," but without any reference to Baptism. "*Episcopi in visitationibus publice examinant juventutem in articulis fidei et in doctrina de Sacramentis. Deinde eam doctrina et exhortationibus confirmant. Idem fit quoque privatim a pastoribus, antequam admittantur præsertim rudiores ad participationem Coenæ Dominicæ.*" The children were often admitted to the Communion when they were only from six to seven years of age. Under the influence of Spener catechetical instruction received the most earnest attention. And, as the chief aim was that the minister should be assured of the fitness of the young, the examination sometimes took place privately in his house. In Resenius' book of 1627 "*De executione visitationis catecheticae,*" it is said that the examination in Luther's Catechism occurred in the Church. "If then any are found to have learned well, with explanation and pious feeling, they shall not only be commended, but shall be confirmed with the imposition of hands either by the Bishop or the Pastor, and then be admitted to the Communion."

In Iceland, which belongs to Denmark, Bishop Gudbrand Thorlakson, in 1596, ordered that the young, who had learned the Catechism, should meet for examination on the first or second Sunday after Easter and Pentecost; that the minister should announce to the congregation that these young Christians desired to come into closer union with the Lord through the Sacrament of the altar; and that he should ask the prayers of the congregation for their spiritual welfare. Then the young people declared their faith by reciting the Catechism, after which the minister read a promise which they repeated after him,



but which made no reference to Baptism. Then followed the imposition of the right hand, and the young accompanied their parents to the altar and communed.

In view of this presentation of the subject we are not surprised at the statement of Pontoppidan ( *Annales*, 4. 518 ) that, during the XVII and well into the XVIII century, *Confirmation* was not known in Denmark, although in 1706, Bishop Mueller proposed its restoration according to the "*primitivæ ecclesiæ ritum*," an attempt which failed. But individual ministers, and especially the German pastors in Copenhagen, began to practice the public examination, and, in 1734, Bishop Hersleb introduced it in Christiania. And on the 13th of January, 1736, King Christian VI, by the advice of Bishop Bluhme enacted a law bearing on the subject. The principal changes made in the general practice were : the solemn repetition of the baptismal vows, and the statement that the aim is to prepare the young for the Communion. In one Section it is declared that "the nature, quality and importance of Confirmation consist in this, that the catechumens shall repeat and confirm that covenant, which their sponsors, at their Baptism, made for them, and that they shall be reminded that now in these days they must examine themselves before the Lord as to how they have kept their baptismal covenant, and whether they find themselves in the state in which Baptism placed them, as otherwise they would not be worthy to appear before the face of the Lord and the Christian congregation.

It was also ordered that a prescribed course of study must be pursued, and that then the pastor must meet them in his house twice in each week for at least three months, and not simply go over the course but labor for their salvation. And it was farther ordered that the Confirmation should take place publicly in the church on appointed days ; that these requirements were binding on all ; and that the service should be conducted with the greatest solemnity. This new order met with some opposition at first, but that soon ceased, and very few changes have been made down to the present time.

This order is also observed in the Lutheran Churches in the Danish West India Islands. Their "*Liturgy and Prayers*," in the English language printed in Copenhagen, is in the hands of the writer.

#### THE LORD'S SUPPER.

In the order for the administration of the Lord's Supper, the Danish Church departed from the canon of the Catholic Church and limited it to the Lord's Prayer, the words of the Institution, Collect



and Benediction, as Luther had done, but added an eminently practical address to the communicants. This address was given immediately after the consecration and before the distribution, as seen in the Liturgy of Malmoe of 1529, but, in 1535, it was placed before the consecration. The Lord's Prayer has been generally used at the consecration, but not always in connection with the words of the Institution as now. In 1529 it appears coupled with the Admonition, and the Ordinance directed that the Prayer should be intoned according to the prescribed musical notes.

The words of the Institution, which in the Catholic Church were repeated by the priest inaudibly, were in all the evangelical churches sung aloud, and the Danish Ritual directed that it should be done "alta voce." And at this point the question of the elevation of the elements received attention. The Catholic practice of elevating the elements for adoration was, of course, abandoned at once, but the first instruction on the subject was given in 1529 when the minister was directed to "lift up" (loefte) the plate and cup, but the Ordinance left this to the judgment of the minister. But in the Hand Book of 1539 Vormordsen directly forbade it, and yet the proceedings of the Synod of Antvorskov show that it was still practiced in many places, and hence, in the spirit of compromise, the Synod of Copenhagen ordered, that, during the consecration and near its close, the minister should make a "decens elevatio." (Pont. Annal., 3, 250.) But the elevation as a separate act was forbidden, and before the Norwegian Ordinance was published, the "lifting up" gave place to the later practice of merely taking the plate and cup in the hand.

Another question also arose, namely, whether there should be another consecration if the consecrated bread and wine were exhausted. An affirmative answer is given by the Ordinance and the Synod of 1540; and the Hand Books of 1535 and 1539 both direct that such consecration shall take place without interrupting the singing of the hymn, and that the words of the Institution shall be said and not sung.

In accord with the example of Luther, the Hand Book of 1535, and Bugenhagen's instructions for the monasteries, the words of the Institution were divided and the bread distributed as soon as consecrated, and then the wine consecrated and distributed. But the Synod of Copenhagen, 1540, ordered the simultaneous consecration of both elements. (Pont. Annal., 3, 251, De distributione.) And the distribution took place immediately after the consecration.

In connection with the distribution the question arose whether



the minister should partake of the Communion at his own hands. He was authorized by the Synod of Antvorskov to do so at the public service and also when administering the Sacrament to the sick. And the practice was, of course, approved by Bugenhagen, who gives the following rubric in his German "Ordnung der evangelische Messe" of 1524—a copy of which lies before me—"Nach diesem gebet speyst der prierster sich selbs, darnach das Volck." But in 1640 the practice was allowed only in exceptional cases. In 1886 the practice was officially and without limitations authorized, and so the matter stands now.

At the distribution, according to the Liturgy of 1529, the minister said,—“the receiving of the body of Jesus Christ strengthen thee unto eternal life; the partaking of the blood of Jesus Christ be unto thee for help and comfort. Amen.” But the Ordinance, 1536, directed that the distribution should take place *in silence*, as follows: “the minister shall say nothing to those who commune, since it was audibly said to all the people when it was consecrated.” But the Synod of Copenhagen modified this by allowing “that something might be said, but as briefly as possible, as “receive the body of Jesus Christ; receive the blood of Jesus Christ.” For a time the word “true” was prefixed to the words “body” and “blood,” but later it was omitted as implied and therefore unnecessary. At the close of each Communion, where the Catholic Church offered a prayer called the “Communio,” there the Danish church used a hymn, as noted in the Liturgy of 1529, and in that of 1553 this hymn is designated, which begins as follows:—“God be praised and blest, who Himself has fed us with His body and blood; may God turn this to our good. Kyrie eleison.”

A hymn was always sung during the distribution. Sometimes the Sanctus and Agnus Dei were sung as hymns, the former before the consecration and the latter either before or after the distribution. But the Synod of Antvorskov limited the use of these to the great Festivals. When the singing ceased a prescribed Collect was offered. Then followed the Responsory—“the peace of the Lord be with you,” and then the Aaronic Benediction sung in the same tone as the Collect. In 1554, Palladius urged that it should be said in singularis.

The revised order of 1895 is as follows:

1. Address to the Communicants.
2. Lord's Prayer.
3. Words of the Institution.
4. Distribution. “This is Jesus' true body. This is Jesus' true blood.”



5. At the close of each Communion : "The crucified and risen Christ Jesus, Who has now fed you with His holy body and blood, wherewith He made fullest satisfaction for all your sins, strengthen and uphold you therewith in a true faith unto life everlasting."

6. Collect.

7. Aaronic Benediction.

The remaining parts of the Liturgy are full of interest, but for want of space, cannot be treated in this paper.

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